This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

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1-36. (Cancelled)

37. (Previously presented) A method for selectively catalyzing gas phase exothermic reactions comprising employing in said reaction a catalyst pellet comprising:

a. a uniform cross-section or, if not uniform, a cross section having a deviation from the average cross-section area of less than 30%, wherein the cross-section is substantially parallelogram-shaped; and

b. one or more through-bores, having:

1. axes which are parallel to each other and to the axis of the pellet or, if not parallel, axes having a deviation from a parallel line of less than 20%; and

2. uniform cross-sections, or, if not uniform, cross-sections having a deviation from the average cross-section of less than 30%; and wherein said one or more through-bores further comprise:

i. one bore having the same shape as the cross-section of the pellet or two or more bores obtained by introducing internal reinforcing vanes in said one bore; or

ii. two or more bores having a circular or elliptical shape and, if four or more bores are present, having different distances between the centres of the non-adjacent couples of bores.

38. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 37 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 4 mm $< P_1 <$ 15 mm, 4 mm $< P_2 <$ 15 mm, 0.5 mm $< P_3 <$ 4 mm, 3 mm $< P_4 <$ 15 mm; wherein P_1 is the main diagonal of the parallelogram, P_2 is the secondary diagonal of the parallelogram, P_3 is the maximum wall thickness, and P_4 is the length of the parallelogram.

39. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 38 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 4 mm < P_1 < 9 mm, 4 mm < P_2 < 9 mm, 0.7 mm < P_3 < 2 mm, 4 mm P_4 < 8 mm.

40. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 37 wherein the catalyst pellet has a rhomboidal cross-section with at least one reinforcing vane connecting two opposite edges and at least two bores.

41. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 40 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 4 mm < R_1 < 15 mm, 4 mm < R_2 < 15 mm, 0.5 mm < R_3 < 3 mm, 3 mm < R_4 < 15 mm; wherein R_1 is the longest size of the cross-section, R_2 is the shortest size of the cross-section, R_3 is the largest wall thickness of the bores, and R_4 is the length.

42. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 41 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 4 mm < R_1 < 9 mm, 4 mm < R_2 < 9 mm, 0.7 mm < R_3 < 2 mm, 4 mm < R_4 < 8 mm.

43. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 37 wherein the catalyst pellet has a rhomboidal cross-section with at least one reinforcing vane connecting two opposite sides and at least two bores.

44. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 43 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 4 mm < R_1 < 15 mm, 4 mm < R_2 < 15 mm, 0.5 mm < R_3 < 3 mm, 3 mm < R_4 < 15 mm; wherein R_1 is the longest size of the cross-section, R_2 is the shortest size of the cross-section, R_3 is the largest wall thickness of the bores, and R_4 is the length.

45. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 44 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 4 mm < R_1 < 9 mm, 4 mm < R_2 < 9 mm, 0.7 mm < R_3 < 2 mm, 4 mm < R_4 < 8 mm.

46. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 43 wherein the catalyst pellet has a square cross-section with at least two reinforcing vanes and four bores.

47. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 46 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 3 mm < Q_1 < 10.5 mm, 0.5 mm < Q_3 < 3 mm, 3 mm < Q_4 < 15 mm; wherein Q_1 is the side of the square, Q_3 is the wall thickness, and Q_4 is the length.

48. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 47 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 4 mm < Q_1 < 9 mm, 0.7 mm < Q_3 < 2 mm, 3 mm < Q_4 < 8 mm.

49. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 37 wherein the catalyst pellet has a rhomboidal cross-section with at least four circular bores.

50. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 49 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 4 mm < T_1 < 15 mm, 4 mm < T_2 < 15 mm, 0.5 mm < T_3 < 3 mm, 3 mm < T_4 < 15 mm; wherein T_1 is the longest size of the cross-section, T_2 is the shortest size of the cross-section, T_3 is the largest wall thickness of the bores, and T_4 is the length; and wherein the diameter of the bores is between 0.7 and 3 mm.

51. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 50 wherein the catalyst pellet has the following size: 4 mm < T_1 < 9 mm, 4 mm < T_2 < 9 mm, 0.7 mm < T_3 < 2 mm, 3 mm < T_4 < 8 mm.

52. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 37 wherein the sides and/or the corners of the external contour of the catalyst pellet cross-section are rounded in such a way that the catalyst pellet cross-section remains substantially parallelogram-shaped and the ratio between the area of the cross-section of the pellets, including the cross-section of the bores, and the area of the parallelogram circumscribing the external contour of the pellet cross-section is greater than 0.75.

53. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 52 wherein said ratio is greater than 0.85.

54. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 37 wherein the sides of the external contour of the catalyst pellet cross-section are curved, the curve being convex or concave or both.

55. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 54 wherein the curve is convex.

56. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 37 wherein the sides and/or the edges of the external contour of the catalyst pellet cross-section are curved, and the curves corresponding to the sides of the external contour of the cross-section are concave and the curves corresponding to the edges of the external contour of the cross-section are convex.

57. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 37 with one bore having the same shape as the cross-section of the catalyst pellet or, optionally, with two or more bores obtained by introducing internal reinforcing vanes in said one bore, wherein the sides and/or the corners of the contour of the bores cross-section are rounded in such a way that the ratio between the area of the cross-section of the bores and the area of the cross-section of the parallelogram circumscribing the external contour of the bores is higher than 0.75.

58. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 57 wherein said ratio is higher than 0.85.

59. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 37 wherein the catalyst pellet has two or more bores obtained by introducing internal reinforcing vanes in one bore having the same shape of the cross-section of the pellet, wherein said reinforcing vanes are disposed to connect the opposite edges or the opposite sides of the external contour of the bore cross-section.

60. (Currently amended) The method of claim 37, wherein the gas phase exothermic ~~reactions are~~ reaction is selected from the group consisting of selective chlorination and/or oxychlorination of alkenes or alkanes, and the selective oxidation of alkenes.

61. (Currently amended) The method of claim 60, wherein the ~~reactions are further~~ gas phase exothermic reaction is selected from the group consisting of: the conversion of ethylene with chlorine to 1,2-dichloroethane; the conversion of ethylene with hydrogen chloride with air or oxygen to give 1,2-dichloroethane; the conversion of ethane with hydrogen chloride with air or oxygen to give saturated and unsaturated chlorinated hydrocarbons; and the reaction of methane with chlorine.

62. (Currently amended) The method of claim 61, wherein the gas phase exothermic reaction is ~~catalyst for~~ the oxychlorination ~~reaction~~ of ethylene and the catalyst pellet contains copper in an amount of 1-12 wt%.

63. (Currently amended) The method of claim 62, wherein the catalyst pellet ~~for the oxychlorination reaction of ethylene~~ further comprises at least one of the alkali metals, alkaline earth metals, group IIB metals or lanthanides in a total amount up to 15 wt%.

64. (Currently amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the alkali metal is lithium, potassium, ~~or~~ cesium, or ~~a combination~~ combinations thereof.

65. (Currently amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the ~~alkali~~ alkaline earth metal is magnesium.

66. (Currently amended) The method of claim 63, wherein the lanthanide is cerium, ~~or~~ lanthanum, or a combination thereof.

67. (Currently amended) The method of claim 61, wherein the gas phase exothermic reaction is ~~catalyst for~~ the oxychlorination ~~reaction~~ of ethane and the catalyst pellet contains copper and/or nickel and an alkali metal.

68. (Currently amended) The method of claim 67, wherein the catalyst pellet ~~for the oxychlorination reaction of ethane~~ further comprises at least one of the alkaline earth metals, group IIB metals or lanthanides.

69. (Currently amended) The method of claim 61, wherein the gas phase exothermic reaction is ~~catalyst for~~ the selective oxidation ~~reaction~~ of ethylene and the catalyst pellet further comprises silver and at least one of the alkali or alkaline earth metals.

70. (Previously presented) A method for selectively catalyzing gas phase endothermic reactions comprising employing in said reaction a catalyst pellet comprising:

a. a uniform cross-section or, if not uniform, a cross section having a deviation from the average cross-section area of less than 30%, wherein the cross-section is substantially parallelogram-shaped; and

b. one or more through-bores, having:

   1. axes which are parallel to each other and to the axis of the pellet or, if not parallel, axes having a deviation from a parallel line of less than 20%; and

   2. uniform cross-sections, or, if not uniform, cross-sections having a deviation from the average cross-section of less than 30%; and wherein said one or more through-bores further comprise:

      i. one bore having the same shape as the cross-section of the pellet or two or more bores obtained by introducing internal reinforcing vanes in said one bore; or

      ii. two or more bores having a circular or elliptical shape and, if four or more bores are present, having different distances between the centres of the non-adjacent couples of bores.